UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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DH/1965
25 August 1995

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council welcomes 17 August Tajik Protocol; calls on parties to implement commitments fully.

* Chairman of Special Commission says Iraq developed full-scale biological weapons programme; United States says conditions do not exist to lift sanctions.

* Secretary-General addresses National Assembly of Portugal; calls for greater promotion of development and democracy.

* Refugees return to camps in Zaire following suspension of expulsion policy.

* United States Ambassador outlines U.S. goals for Beijing Women's Conference; expresses concern at denial of visas and alleged detention of human rights activists.

* UNITAR announces distribution of geographic information system software to Viet Nam, Niger and Tanzania.

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The Security Council today welcomed the Protocol on the fundamental principles for establishing peace and national accord in Tajikistan, which was signed by the President of Tajikistan and the leader of the Tajik opposition on 17 August. In a statement by Council President Nugroho Wisnumurti (Indonesia), the Council called upon the parties to implement fully the commitments contained in the Protocol.

The Council supported the agreement of the parties to conduct the continual round of talks due to begin on 18 September 1995, with the aim of concluding a general agreement on the establishment of peace and national accord in Tajikistan. It urged the parties to agree as soon as possible on the venue of the negotiations.

The Council welcomed the agreement reached by the parties to extend the existing cease-fire for six months until 26 February 1996, and called on the parties to comply strictly with this agreement. It called upon all States and

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others concerned to discourage any activities that could complicate or hinder the peace process, respecting fully the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Tajikistan and the inviolability of the Tajik-Afghan border.

The Security Council urged the parties to implement as quickly as possible the confidence-building measures agreed upon during the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks held in Almaty. It stressed the need to continue the existing close contacts of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) with the parties as well as its close liaison with the CIS Collective Peace-Keeping Forces, with the Russian border forces and with the OSCE Mission in Tajikistan.

The Council welcomed the contributions by some Member States to the voluntary fund for the Tajikistan peace process, and encouraged other Member States to contribute.

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The Chairman of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), Rolf Ekeus, today said new information obtained from Iraq revealed the development of a "full-scale" biological weapons programme, which matured in a very aggressive manner after the invasion of Kuwait. Speaking to the press after briefing the Security Council, Mr. Ekeus said Iraq now admitted to having gone far beyond what it had stated in its written declaration on biological weapons of 4 August.

Now Iraq had admitted to having produced ten times more anthrax than it had stated in the declaration. Furthermore, three different types of biological warfare agents, including one that had been kept secret until now, had been put into a total of 191 bombs and missiles. In all, he said, Iraq admitted to producing some 20,000 litres of biological agents. The process of filling weapons with the agents took place between 1 to 23 December 1990, just before the outbreak of the Gulf war. He said Iraq denied that it had used any biological weapons and UNSCOM had no reason to believe otherwise. Iraq has now declared that all agents were destroyed in July/August 1991, which would require verification by UNSCOM.

Mr. Ekeus also said Iraq admitted to the development of home-made missiles, which required vigorous investigation. He also said Iraq had supplied the International Atomic Energy Agency with information that it was working on a crash programme, immediately after the invasion of Kuwait, to produce a nuclear bomb from highly enriched uranium by April 1991.

Mr. Ekeus informed correspondents that the Iraqi Government had, at the last minute, provided him with some 150 boxes of documents on Iraq's nuclear, biological, chemical and missile programmes. UNSCOM was now working to verify that all information was correct, which would be a lengthy and difficult process.

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Meanwhile, United States Ambassador Madeleine Albright has referred to Ambassador Ekeus' briefing to the Security Council as "chilling". Speaking to correspondents today outside the Council chamber, she said the U.S. position, which was shared by most Council members, was that sanctions would not be lifted until Iraq had complied with all of its obligations under Council resolutions.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has stressed the importance of development and democracy in a speech today to the Portuguese National Assembly, in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. He said it was unconscionable and unacceptable at the end of the twentieth century, that 1.3 billion people were living in absolute poverty and that basic health care was not available to over 1.5 billion people worldwide. He called for greater efforts in support of development, especially in Africa. The women and men of Africa expected the hand of friendship, he said, and we must not fail them.

On the issue of democracy, he stressed that democratic values can and should be assimilated by all cultures. Although the United Nations was engaged in "democratization diplomacy" by providing electoral assistance, it should go further. The United Nations should also provide Member States with technical assistance which would allow them to adapt their institutions, to educate their citizens and train managers, to establish independent judiciaries, and to form armies which would respect the rule of law and police forces which would uphold civil liberties.

The Secretary-General also thanked Portugal for the role it played in the negotiations in Angola, and its recent substantial increase in peace-keeping contributions.

Saturday, the Secretary-General will meet with Thorvald Stoltenberg, Co-Chairman of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia. He will then depart Lisbon for New York.

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A large number of the 173,000 refugees who fled camps in Zaire to avoid forced repatriation to Rwanda are reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to be returning to camps in Zaire today, following yesterday's announcement by Zaire of suspension of its expulsion policy. According to a United Nations spokesman, up to 50 percent of the inhabitants of some camps had already returned by midday Friday.

Food distribution and other international assistance had resumed. UNHCR was combing the surrounding hills of the various camps to inform people that it was safe to return. The beginning of a voluntary repatriation, under

UNHCR, was getting underway. On Friday a small convoy went to Rwanda with fewer than 100 people.

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The United States delegation will go to the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women to promote equal opportunity between men and women and to stress that violence against women is a crime. Speaking as the head of the U.S. delegation, U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright today told correspondents that the release of American human rights activist Harry Wu had removed an obstacle to U.S.-China relations and improved the climate for U.S. participation in the Conference. She said it had not yet been decided whether First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton would attend the Conference.

Outlining U.S. goals for the Conference, Ambassador Albright said the United States wanted to promote and protect the human rights of women, end violence against women, expand women's participation in political and economic decision-making, ensure equal access for women to education and healthcare, and strengthen families through efforts to balance the work and family responsibilities of women and men. The Clinton Adminstration would use the Conference "to underline the truth that violence against women is not cultural; it is criminal and we all have a responsibility to stop it".

The U.S. Ambassador expressed concern at logistical difficulties which had not been resolved and might prevent people from attending the Conference. She had raised the issue with the Secretary-General and the Chinese. She would meet again today with the Chinese Ambassador to discuss the several hundred American NGO participants who were still awaiting their visas. The U.S. view was that "we understand the complexity of hosting such a Conference, but we could not excuse a deliberate effort to deny visas to participants who are peaceful but who happen to embrace policies the Chinese Government does not". Mrs. Albright also expressed concern at reports that China had detained human rights activists in advance of the Conference.

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The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has received a contribution of geographic information system software, valued in excess of $200,000, from the Environmental Systems Research Institute of Redlands, California. Copies of the software will be distributed to participants in UNITAR's national information systems training workshops this year in Viet Nam, Niger and Tanzania.

The donation was made under the framework of a memorandum of understanding signed in July between the California Institute and UNITAR. The agreement also provides for the Institute's sharing of expertise in geographic information system training and research to support UNITAR's training activities.

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UNITED NATIONS

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General condemns shelling of Sarajevo; instructs military commanders to investigate immediately.

* Security Council welcomes Secretary-General's proposal to appoint Cape Verde Ambassador as Special Envoy to Great Lakes region.

* Military leaders sign cease-fire agreement in Croatia's Sector East.

* Fewer refugees return to Rwanda than anticipated; UNHCR Ogata to meet with Zaire's Prime Minister Tuesday.

* Secretary-General says International Tribunal for Rwanda has sound financial basis; first indictments expected before year-end.

* Government experts begin one-week meeting in Geneva to strengthen 1987 Montreal Protocol on ozone depletion.

* Committee on International Criminal Court concludes session; requests General Assembly to work towards early completion of draft convention establishing Court.

* Youth leaders from over 115 countries gather at United Nations for world youth leadership training summit.

* UNDP Administrator proposes that nationally recruited professional project personnel be granted greater financial powers for development projects.

* On eve of Beijing Conference, DPI announces publication of "United Nations and Advancement of Women, 1945-1995".

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has condemned today's shelling of downtown Sarajevo, which killed an estimated 33 innocent civilians and injured 74 others. He has called on the military commanders on the ground to investigate the attack immediately and to take appropriate action without

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the continued and senseless shedding of blood in Bosnia and Herzegovina was totally unacceptable.

According to his Spokesman, the damage was done by a 120 millimetre mortar shell which struck some 30 metres away from the Markale market -- the same marketplace that was hit in February 1994, killing 68 people and wounding over 200. Today's shelling was the worst single incident in Sarajevo since that time. The Spokesman said there were a number of other shells that fell on Sarajevo, totally six or seven, but that all reported fatalities and casualties were a result of the shell near the marketplace.

The United Nations in Sarajevo had indicated that in order to respond to the attack it was necessary to get all the facts straight and that an intense investigation was underway, including crater analysis, to determine the origin of the fire. Both parties, the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serbs, had accused each other of launching the attack. The Spokesman said it was premature to speculate on the origin of the shell until there was confirmation. A response would be determined by General Janvier, the Force Commander of UNPF, and General Smith, the Commander of UNPROFOR. The Spokesman underlined that at this time no options were being ruled out.

Meanwhile, Special Representative Yasushi Akashi has expressed deep sadness and anger at "the utter depravity shown by those responsible for this inhuman act". In a statement issued today, he said the attack was yet another example of the senseless and unacceptable killing of innocent civilians in a United Nations designated safe area. Should ongoing investigations by UNPROFOR military commanders determine responsibility, he warned those responsible that strong action would be taken.

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The Security Council has welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to appoint Jose Luis Jesus, currently the Ambassador of Cape Verde to Portugal, as his Special Envoy to the Great Lakes region. Ambassador Jesus, who is at United Nations headquarters in New York this week for briefings before departing for the region, was formerly Cape Verde's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York.

As Special Envoy, Ambassador Jesus will facilitate the preparation and convening of the regional Conference on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa, which has been requested by the Security Council. With Ambassador Jesus' appointment, the Secretary-General has a total of 23 special/personal envoys or representatives worldwide.

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The two local military commanders in Croatia's Sector East have agreed on a cease-fire, according to a United Nations Spokesman. The agreement came into effect Saturday at noon local time. The local Croatian Army Commander

and the Croatian Serb Commander also agreed to meet again Tuesday to discuss further measures to ease tensions in the Sector.

Since the cease-fire went into effect, there have been very few firing incidents. The Spokesman said the United Nations was encouraged by this development and hoped it would lead to a more lasting peace in the area. Special Representative Yasushi Akashi was scheduled to travel to Sector East on Wednesday for meetings with local officials. Mr. Akashi was travelling to Belgrade Tuesday for a private meeting with President Milosevic.

In other news, the death of a French peace-keeper over the weekend, following a road accident on Friday, brought to 179 the total number of United Nations soldiers who have lost their lives in the former Yugoslavia.

Regarding the pull-out of the military contingents of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO), the first group of 120 Nepalese soldiers had already departed, according to the United Nations Spokesman. The next departure would be on 7 September and would include a substantial number of Argentineans and more Nepalese. Between 7 September and 15 October, several thousand additional troops were expected to be withdrawn.

In Gorazde, the 80 remaining British troops are expected to leave Tuesday. The Spokesman said a team of eight unarmed United Nations military observers would stay in the pocket to monitor and observe the situation on the ground. He said the deterrent now available for Gorazde was extensive use of NATO air-power.

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The voluntary return of refugees into Rwanda over the weekend from camps around Goma, Zaire was much less than anticipated, according to a United Nations Spokesman. Talks were held over the weekend between a special envoy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Zairian officials.

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata would meet with the Prime Minister of Zaire in Geneva on Tuesday to seek agreement on a formal suspension of the expulsions and on a programme of voluntary return. Following the meeting, Mrs. Ogata would leave for the area, as requested by the Secretary-General.

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The International Tribunal for Rwanda, to be located in Arusha, Tanzania, now has a solid financial basis and will be operational later this year. That is the assessment of the Secretary-General in a report to the Security Council dated 25 August in which he says the first indictments are still expected before the end of 1995.

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According to the report, judges have been assigned to the two trial chambers and the Registrar is expected to be appointed within the next few days. The Tribunal has a total of 18 Professional staff and 56 additional staff are expected to arrive in Kigali shortly to join the Prosecutor's office. Present inquiries centre around a small number of individuals who are suspected of being principally responsible for the planning, incitement or commission of crimes. Investigators are analysing a large volume of material that has been collected during the past months and witnesses are being interviewed in Africa, Europe and North America. So far, no suspects appropriate for investigation have been found amongst persons currently being held in Rwandan prisons.

The President of the Tribunal and the Prosecutor will travel together to Kigali and Arusha next week to meet with government and United Nations officials to discuss various questions concerning the establishment of the Tribunal.

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Government experts today began a one-week meeting in Geneva to finalize recommendations to strengthen the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the meeting comes at a time when complacency, skepticism and the rapid increase in the consumption of ozone depleting substances (ODS) by several developing countries threaten to undo Protocol achievements.

Representatives of the 149 countries that ratified the treaty will discuss a series of proposed adjustments and amendments designed to further protect the Earth's ozone layer. All revisions will be formally presented for adoption later this year at the Meeting of the Protocol Parties in Vienna from 5 to 7 December.

The Montreal Protocol has been amended twice since its inception in 1987 - in London in 1990 and Copenhagen in 1992 - based on new scientific findings. In the latest assessment report of 1994, a panel found that the rates of atmospheric build-up of ozone depleting substances had slowed in recent years as a direct result of implementation of the Protocol. The peak global ozone depletion would occur during the next few years and then recover in over 50 years if additional measures were now taken. It recommended that developed countries tighten control measures on methyl bromide, which is used as a pesticide; however, the panel said the ozone layer would never recover if developing countries did not adopt some control measures for hydrochloroflourocarbons and methyl bromide, and if they increased their consumption of these substances at any significant rate.

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The Ad Hoc Committee on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court has recommended that the General Assembly work towards the early

completion of a draft resolution establishing the Court. The draft would then be considered by a confe ence of plenipotentiaries.

The decision was taken late Friday evening as the Committee approved its report to the General Assembly. Chairman Adriaan Bos (Netherlands) said the Committee had completed a substantial workload. During deliberations, speakers generally supported the court's competence over such crimes as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. There was widespread agreement that the statute should precisely define, rather than simply enumerate, crimes to be dealt with by the court.

* * *

A five-day youth leadership training summit began at United Nations Headquarters today as part of the commemoration of the United Nations 50th anniversary. Attended by youth leaders from over 115 countries, the summit includes five plenary sessions and four training workshops designed to help young people develop specific skills. Plenary sessions will be carried with sound, text and photos on the Internet, enabling people across the globe to participate.

The summit will emphasize the continued importance of the United Nations in world affairs and the crucial role of youth for the future. The goals of the summit are to build critical leadership skills and promote a range of tools at the disposal of youth in achieving their goals. It is being organized by the International Youth Forum based at York University, Canada and co-sponsored by the secretariat of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary.

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In a move to increase efficiency, UNDP Administrator Gustave Speth has recommended that nationally recruited professional project personnel be granted greater financial powers to supervise development projects. In a report to the UNDP Executive Board, Mr. Speth recommends that internal financial rules and regulations be amended to allow national personnel to certify, approve or be appointed as signatories on UNDP project bank accounts.

In connection with the greater emphasis placed on national capacity-building, the report points out that UNDP has seen increased use of national human resources in the implementation of programmes and projects. The steady trend away from the use of international expertise has resulted in significant operational constraints where project supervision has been entrusted to nationally recruited personnel. Under current constraints, Mr. Speth says, "it is extremely difficult for project activities to be carried out effectively".

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The United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) has released a new book, The United Nations and the Advancement of Women, 1945-1995, on the eve of the Beijing Women's Conference. The sixth volume in the "blue book" series, the book outlines United Nations efforts to promote women's rights and includes over 100 historic United Nations documents.

The book features detailed chronologies of events and United Nations conferences and seminars designed to elevate the human rights of women to a prominent place on the international agenda. As Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali writes in his introduction, "No enduring solution to society's most threatening social, economic and political problems can be found without the full participation, and the full empowerment of the world's women."

The United Nations and the Advancement of Women, 1945-1995 is on sale at the United Nations bookstore in New York and will be available shortly in Geneva and other bookstores worldwide. It will also be on sale, along with a Chinese edition, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing from 4 to 15 September.

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UNITED NATIONS

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* United Nations concludes Bosnian Serbs responsible for mortar attack on Sarajevo; says appropriate action will be taken.

* Security Council requests Secretary-General to establish international commission of inquiry to investigate 1993 coup attempt in Burundi and ensuing massacres.

* United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees meets Prime Minister of Zaire to discuss situation in refugee camps.

* Parliamentarians meet at Headquarters to discuss ways to reinvigorate United Nations.

* Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination against Minorities adopts series of resolutions to promote human rights.

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The United Nations has concluded beyond all reasonable doubt that Bosnian Serbs were responsible for yesterday's mortar attack on downtown Sarajevo. After a thorough investigation, the United Nations Protection Force in the Former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) and General Rupert Smith, UNPROFOR Force Commander, concluded that the shells were fired from Bosnian Serb positions. According to a United Nations Spokesman, active consultations are underway among United Nations ground commanders. All options are being examined and appropriate action will be taken.

The attack, the worst in Sarajevo since February 1994, killed over 30 people and injured more than 80. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has joined the Secretary-General and his Special Representative in the former Yugoslavia in condemning the attack. The ICRC's medical delegate in Sarajevo has delivered emergency supplies of intravenous fluids, disinfectants, antibiotics, tetanus vaccine and dressing materials to the main hospitals to assist the victims.

A total of 1,746 firing incidents were recorded in Sarajevo on Monday. Today Sarajevo was described as extremely quiet.

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The Security Council has requested the Secretary-General to urgently establish an international commission of inquiry to investigate the assassination of the President of Burundi on 21 October 1993 and the massacres and violence that followed. By unanimously adopting resolution 1012 (1995) Monday evening, the Council recommended that the commission be composed of five impartial and internationally respected jurists to be selected by the Secretary-General and furnished with adequate support staff.

The commission was also mandated to recommend measures of a legal, political or administrative nature, after consulting with the Government of Burundi, to bring to justice those responsible for those acts. Its recommendations would be aimed at preventing any repetition of the violence, helping to eradicate impunity and promote national reconciliation in Burundi.

The Council called upon the Burundi authorities and institutions, including all Burundi political parties, to cooperate fully with the commission, particularly in the areas of security, assistance, freedom of movement and access in pursuing investigations. It called on all States, United Nations bodies and international humanitarian organizations to collate and make available any substantiated information relevant to the inquiry.

The Council requested the Secretary-General to submit an interim report on the commission's work within three months of its establishment and to submit a final report when it completes its work. It further requested him to provide adequate security for the commission, in cooperation with the Government of Burundi. The Secretary-General was also requested to establish a trust fund to receive voluntary contributions to finance the commission, as a supplement to financing it as an expense of the Organization.

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Sadako Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), today met in Geneva with the Prime Minister of Zaire to discuss the situation in the refugee camps. According to a United Nations Spokesman, she indicated the continuing position of UNHCR that the forcible return of refugees would not solve the problem. She would begin her mission to the region on Wednesday, as requested by the Secretary-General, to look into ways to promote and facilitate voluntary repatriation.

The Prime Minister of Zaire held a press conference in Geneva today in which he indicated that there was a 31 December deadline for the repatriation of the refugees, after which Zaire would resume forcible returns. UNHCR's position was that while the agency was fully committed to mobilizing all the resources and support necessary for voluntary repatriation, the High Commissioner could not commit herself to any rigid time-frame.

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In other news, it was announced today that Judge Richard Goldstone, the Prosecutor for the International Tribunal for Rwanda, would travel to Rwanda on Wednesday. He has been instructed by the Secretary-General to take every step to speed up the process of setting up the Tribunal so that those who masterminded the genocide could be brought to justice.

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Members of parliaments from over 70 countries are meeting this week at Headquarters to discuss ways to meet the main challenges facing the international community, to reinvigorate the United Nations system and to increase the involvement of parliamentarians in United Nations activities.

The Secretary-General will address the opening ceremony of the three-day meeting, which begins at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday in the General Assembly Hall. Also speaking will be Ahmed Fathy Sorour, President of the Egyptian People's Assembly and President of the Inter-Parliamentary Council. Australian Ambassador Richard Butler, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, will be the guest speaker.

The conference, which will end on Friday with the adoption of a final declaration, is organized by the 135-member Inter-Parliamentary Union. It is being held at Headquarters at the invitation of the Secretary-General to commemorate the United Nations' fiftieth anniversary.

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The Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in Geneva has adopted a number of resolutions expressing concern over human rights violations and calling for enhanced measures to protect human rights. It also decided to take no action on a draft resolution on nuclear tests and the enjoyment of human rights, which would have expressed concern about the French Government's announcement to carry out tests in the Pacific Ocean.

The areas in which resolutions were adopted included: traditional practices affecting the health of women and children; HIV and AIDS; forced evictions; anti-personnel land-mines; human rights and the environment; the right to adequate housing; the human rights of women and the girl child; human rights and extreme poverty; human rights and structural adjustment; and discrimination against indigenous peoples.

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Note: Due to technical problems, three lines from the first paragraph in yesterday's Daily Highlights were inadvertently deleted. The first paragraph should have read as follows:

"Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has condemned today's shelling of downtown Sarajevo, which killed an estimated 33 innocent civilians and injured 74 others. He has called on the military commanders on the ground to investigate the attack immediately and to take appropriate action without delay. In a statement, the Secretary-General expressed outrage that such an attack had occurred in an area where there was no military target. He said the continued and senseless shedding of blood in Bosnia and Herzegovina was totally unacceptable."